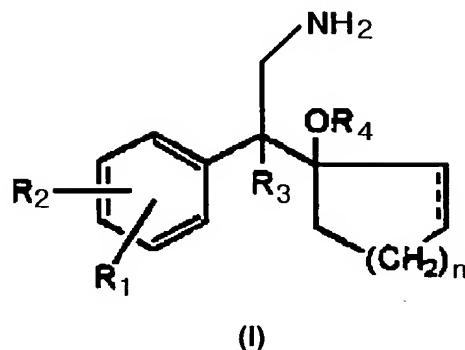


ABSTRACT

A process for the preparation of a compound of formula I,

5

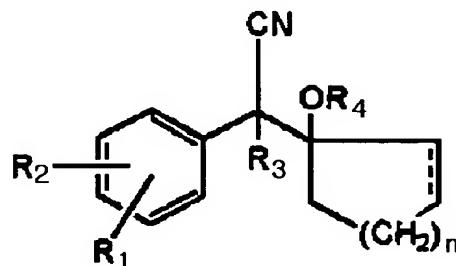


(I)

wherein R₁ and R₂ are ortho or para substituents, independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxyl, C₁-C₆ alkyl, C₁-C₆ alkoxy, C₇-C₉ aralkoxy, C₂-C₇ alkanoyloxy, C₁-C₆ alkylmercapto, halo and trifluoromethyl; R₃ is hydrogen or C₁-C₆ alkyl ; R₄ is hydrogen, C₁-C₆ alkyl, formyl or C₂-C₇ alkanoyl; n is one of the integers 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4; and the dotted line represents optional olefinic unsaturation;

comprising hydrogenating a compound of formula III,

15



(III)

in the presence of a nickel or cobalt catalyst at a temperature of about 5°C to 25°C.